



BACKPACKS & HARDHATS

The Official CERT Team Member Newsletter

Mascot Contest!

Enter and Win!

Deadline:
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Welcome to Our First Issue

Welcome to the first issue of *Backpacks & Hardhats*. We are designing this to be a communication tool between the members of the Emergency Management Agency and anyone who has participated in any of our CERT programs. It is our goal to:

- Inform you about the many ongoing opportunities for CERT members.
- Introduce you to some of the people involved.
- Tell you about experiences people have had with CERT.
- Pass along information from Cobb County Emergency Management Agency.

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SpotLight: CERT History

By: Steve Barden (class #10)

Our newsletter name, *Backpacks and Hardhats*, represents being prepared in both training and equipment. Preparedness for emergencies is what Cobb County's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) provides Cobb's citizens.

As we have learned in our training, CERT's scope, or mission, is to better assist ourselves, our families and our neighbors in the event of an emergency, until the professional first responders arrive. CERT members are also trained what not to do in an emergency.

CERT members should:

- Assess an emergency area for dangers.
- Suppress small fires.
- Render basic First Aid.
- Perform light search and rescue.

CERT members should NOT:

- Suppress large fires.
- Enter structures that they consider heavily damaged and dangerous.
- Perform hazardous materials cleanup.
- Perform medical, fire or search and rescue operations beyond their level of training.
- Activate or deploy unless directed by the EMA Director or Deputy Director.

The purpose of CERT members during an emergency is to assess the situation, assist immediate family and neighbors and communicate to first responders when they arrive.

These precepts have been in existence since 1985, but the CERT program is relatively young here in Georgia. Cobb County was one of the first counties in Georgia to begin a CERT program, with our first CERT class graduating on Feb. 5, 2004. Since that time, we have held 30 classes and have 349 members. CERT is built on a firm, historical foundation.

CERT History

The CERT concept was born in 1985, when a team from Los Angeles went to Mexico City following the massive (8.1 on the Richter Scale) Mexico City earthquake that killed, by most estimates, over 10,000 people. Mexico City had no training programs, but during the disaster, when the professional response teams were overwhelmed, local citizens organized themselves to perform search and rescue operations. These citizens were credited with saving approximately 800 lives, but in the process more than 100 of the rescuers died during the various rescue attempts. In 1987, the smaller (5.8 on the Richter Scale) Whittier Narrows

(Continued on page 5)

Did You Know?

By: Debbie Casteel (class #8)

Lanita Lloyd accepted the position as manager of Cobb's Emergency Management Agency (EMA) in July 2003 and was appointed deputy director in October 2004. Her past experiences include 19 years with the State of Georgia. She has worked in the areas of communication, licensing, aviation, and has served as the planner for the Georgia State Patrol director. Her last position with the State was as the executive assistant to the deputy commissioner of Georgia's Office of Homeland Security, where she was responsible for planning and project management. Lanita served as a representative on the Coast Guard's Georgia Ports Committee, and participated in and coordinated meetings for the Georgia Office of Homeland Security Task Force, National Governor's Best Practices, and the Regional Whitehouse Office of Homeland Security.

Since arriving in Cobb, Lanita has taken over 400 hours of training along with 20 correspondence courses, completed the CERT Train-the-Trainer Course, and obtained her Emergency Management Certification. In December 2003, she completed four years as a full-time student at Shorter College, and obtained a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration, graduating summa cum laude. She is presently working towards her Master's Degree in Emergency Management at Jacksonville State University. Ms. Lloyd is married to Mickey Lloyd, and together they are the parents of four daughters and a son. They also have two granddaughters.

With Lanita's guidance, the CERT program has now educated 349 people on how to provide emergency care in the event of a crisis that would strain the abilities of Cobb County's professional emergency personnel. With no national CERT requirement or template,



beyond the initial training session, Lanita has spent countless hours in committee meetings evaluating and reevaluating CERT to create a program that will fit the needs of our community in the event of a crisis. Lanita has taken the basic CERT training class, and has created a cohesive program with updates, refresher courses and a newsletter. She is presently working to put CERT members into the community as leaders. It is imperative that we equip CERT members, in order to expedite services and assist our professional emergency personnel, so they can provide a more effective response, resulting in saving lives.

The next time you cross paths with Lanita, take the opportunity to get to know her, you'll be glad you did!

CERT Trivia

By: Carol Thompson (class #16)

ACRONYMS – What do they mean?

- | | |
|---------|----------|
| 1. EMA | 6. UCS |
| 2. EOC | 7. ICS |
| 3. CERT | 8. IMS |
| 4. EOP | 9. PTASS |
| 5. EAS | 10. NFPA |

In Search and Rescue:

- 1) What do you do prior to entering a damaged structure?
- 2) What do you do when you exit the structure?
- 3) What do you do if the structure is too dangerous to enter?
- 4) What should you do if you see a NFPA 704 Diamond?

(Answers found on page 4)

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Who Guides CERT?

By: Joan Mason (Class #14)

Ever wonder who helps direct the CERT program? The Citizens Corps Advisory Council, a six member volunteer council of Cobb County residents, serves the Cobb Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) in an advisory role to help direct, improve and promote the CERT program.

"I depend on these volunteers greatly, and their backgrounds provide a wealth of expertise for us," says Lanita Lloyd, deputy director of CEMA. Lloyd serves as Citizens Corps facilitator, and meets with the advisory group every other month. She calls this council "genuine," and says they are active participants. "They've all attended CERT training like any other CERT, (member) and we apply their skills and abilities in areas that can be most beneficial."

The volunteer council consists of Doug Meeks, Brenda McLean, David Hilton, Jim Shuler, Winston Strickland and Carmen Vega. All are appointed by the County Manager, who is also the director of CEMA. Each Citizen Corps Advisory

Council member is either a citizen of Cobb, works, or owns a business in the county. Council membership size is flexible and can be enlarged to as many as 10 members if needed. Doug Meeks was appointed chairman by the County Manager, as required in the bylaws. Council members have the option of electing other officers as well.

"With their combined years of experience and knowledge, the present advisory council serves the CERT program, and enables us to be a model, not only for our state, but also our nation," says Lloyd. "They've been instrumental in assisting with guidelines like background check requirements, the appeals process, inactive status policy and CERT training."

The Cobb County Board of Commissioners approved the formation of the Citizens Corps in 2003, to provide a liaison between the community and CEMA in the development of volunteer homeland security and emergency management training programs. The bylaws call for the ideal membership model to include: one media representative, one representative from the Neighborhood Safety Commission, two representatives of the community at-large with public safety backgrounds and two general community at-large members.

The Citizen Corps Advisory Council has been meeting since 2003, when it was first organized under the Cobb County Department of Public Safety. In 2004, the program was reorganized under the County Manager, who approved all Advisory Council members to retain their positions. Successive terms for the members are three years or until successors are appointed. CEMA Deputy Director Lanita Lloyd has come to know the value and strength of these individuals and is definitely impressed with the members. Look for highlights on these valuable members of the CERT team in future newsletters.

CERT Training

Lifes Hope Baptist Church

3360 Hicks Road
Marietta, Ga.

Day classes meet

Jan. 10, 17, 24, and 31
(Class meets each *Tuesday*)
9:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m.

Evening classes meet

Jan. 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26, and 31
(Class meets each *Tuesday & Thursday*)
6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

Participants must be *at least* 16-years-old.

If you are interested in attending this training, please contact Anita Leming by email at

aleming@cobbcounty.org

or by phone at (770)499-4567.

Backpacks and Hardhats Ready?

By: Joe Baude (class # 6)

You volunteered, trained, graduated and you were awarded a certificate. You were provided a backpack and hardhat, and became a member of the President's Citizen Corps. You are now a member of a special, readied team of Cobb County citizens. Your readiness to help yourself, family and neighbors during natural and man-made disasters totally depends on your training and other education, as well as your personal emergency survival tools and supplies.

Regardless of your age or wisdom, your experience in dealing with unexpected emergencies and disasters is probably little to none. Your CERT training, your backpack and your hardhat might be the extent of your training and equipment.

If so, you should consider the following questions:

- Where are your CERT backpack and hardhat stored?
- What is in your backpack?
- When is the last time you checked on or used them?
- How often should you refresh the supplies you have in your backpack?
- Should you provide additional equipment to your backpack?
- Where is your CERT training notebook?
- How often do you review CERT training material?
- Do you remember the nine steps in sizing up any situation you may find yourself in during a natural or man made disaster? (Do you think it might be a good idea to write those nine steps on a 3x5 card and place it inside your hardhat?)
- What have you added to your CERT training notebook?
- What training equipment and material might better serve you in a location other than home?
- How do you plan on communicating with CERT and non-CERT neighbors?



Your CERT capability is the result of your decision to be consciously prepared. A Google Internet search for "CERT SUPPLIES" includes many sites. To get ideas on how to improve your readiness, check out sites like these:

<http://www.qualitycertsupplies.com/products.htm>

<http://www.safetyservicesinc.com/certs/>

<http://preparesmart.com/>

(No company on this list is specifically endorsed in any way)

CERT Trivia Answers

ACRONYMS

1. Emergency Management Agency
2. Emergency Operations Center
3. Community Emergency Response Team
4. Emergency Operations Plan
5. Emergency Activation System
6. Unified Command System
7. Incident Command System
8. Incident Management System
9. Pull, Test, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep
10. National Fire Protection Association

IN SEARCH AND RESCUE:

- 1) Make one diagonal slash next to the door.
- 2) Make the opposite slash, to form an "X".
- 3) Draw a box around the X.

Consider it a 'stop' sign. The only action a CERT member should take is to evacuate persons who are downwind, as necessary, to a place uphill and upwind.

Focus On: *Virginia G. Galvin, MD, MPH* *(class #16)*
Chair of CERT Community Preparedness Working Group

I am excited to let you know that the Community Preparedness Working Group is up and running, having met three times before the December refresher courses. Our goal is to provide a roadmap for neighborhoods that are ready to organize and prepare for possible disasters that would effect them. Our members possess varied backgrounds and high levels of expertise for this task. We are anxious to bring these recommendations to our CERT members after their approval by the Cobb County Citizens Corps and Cobb County Emergency Management Agency.

The resulting plan will include sections on:

- Governance
- Liability (this section is now being reviewed by the county attorney)
- Standards for Neighborhood CERTs
- Process for setting up Neighborhood CERTs
- Training and Education Resources available to CERTs
- Emergency Communication
- Integration with Existing Emergency Response Agencies

I was very pleased to be asked by Lanita Lloyd of the Cobb Emergency Management Agency to chair this working group. My medical background includes a residency in Emergency Medicine, where I served as Chief Resident in Emergency Medicine at Grady Hospital. My interest in pre-hospital care led to a position as the Regional EMS Medical Director for the eight-county Metro Atlanta area, a position I held for almost 20 years. As part of that job, I drafted the Trauma System Plan for Atlanta that is currently in operation. I have also served as the District Health Director for Cobb and Douglas Counties until my retirement several years ago, and was in charge of all public health programs in those two counties. This task is one that I take on enthusiastically and hope that some of my experience can be of use to the work of this group.

By bringing some uniformity to the next steps of organization, we believe that CERT will evolve into a fully functional disaster response system, that will integrate with the existing emergency response providers, such as fire, police and EMS (ambulances). The beneficiaries will be our families, our neighbors and our community.

CERT History (continued from page 1) Earthquake in the Los Angeles region that killed 8 people and did over \$350 million in damage, convinced the city to become more aggressive in its citizen training. The City of Los Angeles Fire Department created the Disaster Preparedness Division, which was later changed to the Disaster Preparedness Unit. It was here that the basic CERT ideas were developed.

In 1993, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), working with the Emergency Management Institute (EMI), and the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD), adopted and refined the ideas from the LAFD to establish CERT on a national level. Since that time, there are now CERT programs in virtually every state. As a Cobb County CERT member, you are part of an important, historically proven movement, to better prepare yourself and others in the event of an emergency. We have an active membership and are establishing further, the directions and training of our Cobb County CERT members.

VOLUNTEERS RESPOND TO THE CALL!

By: Dan Connors (Class # 9)

Chair, Community Education Working Group

An "all points e-mail" request went out to Cobb County CERT members on Aug. 17, 2005. No hard hats required for this one! The forum was the Cobb Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) booth at the North Georgia State Fair. The need was for volunteers to meet and greet the citizens of Cobb County and help them understand the value of the CERT program.

They provided assistance to help citizen fairgoers fill out applications for CERT training.

Thirty-four hearty, energetic and "ready to work" CERT members shared staffing duties at the booth for 11 consecutive days, starting with the opening of the fair on Sept. 22, and ending on Oct. 2.

Our one booth among many was located in one of the two exhibit halls at Jim R. Miller Park, and provided a brief window of "Mind Share" for fairgoers as they strolled--some with turkey leg and cotton candy in hand.

Two large CEMA banners were framed by a pair of training photo displays, located on either end of a long table, covered with pamphlets and brochures. Some, in both English and Spanish, helped to slow down

the passing fairgoers. Decked out in their bright reflective vests, and knock out CERT green caps, volunteers stopped over 1250 fairgoers in their tracks. Our volunteers held the attention of many people by explaining the elements of CERT training, punctuated with personal stories about their own training experience and their memorable



firefighter/EMT instructor. Additionally, Cobb County's publication, *Citizen's Action Guide*, proved to be an excellent take home tool to help citizens be more prepared and more confident in their ability to better handle an emergency. Fairgoers left with a sense of the value and practicality of household emergency preparedness, during these times of 24-hour TV disaster images.

An amazing number of Cobb citizens actually took the time to complete the application for CERT training, with a potential

for 206 new CERT members at a time when the total trained CERT force in the county just passed the 300 mark.

And how do 34 volunteers neatly fit into two, three, and four person teams to log a startling 322 total volunteer hours at the fair booth? Only through the long hours of juggling, shifting, scheduling, and yes, rescheduling (all via email) by CERT member Carol Thompson! It was Carol's organizational skills and dedication that blended 34 individual CERT volunteers into crisp teams. I tip my new green CERT cap to all of the volunteers!! Many thanks! It was an honor to serve with each of you. Let's do it again!

Contest for Newsletter Mascot

Enter our Newsletter Mascot Contest. Contest deadline Jan. 15, 2006.

Draw your idea of what our mascot should be, and send it to:

Attention: CERT Mascot

c/o Cobb County EMA
140 North Marietta Parkway
Marietta, GA 30060



Cobb County...Expect the Best!

This is an official publication of the Cobb County Board of Commissioners.

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